

Message Text

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TO USMISSION NATO IMMEDIATE

INFO ALL NATO CAPITALS

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, NATO

SUBJECT: FOLLOW-UP TO NATOMIN: SECRETARY'S PROPOSAL
FOR MEETINGS OF POLITICAL DIRECTORS

REF: USNATO 344

1. SINCE WE CONTINUE TO WISH TO PURSUE PROPOSAL FOR MEETINGS OF THE NAC WITH POLITICAL DIRECTORS, IT WILL BE NECESSARY, IN LIGHT OF FRENCH POSITION REPORTED REFTTEL, TO ATTEMPT TO DEAL WITH SPECIFIC FRENCH OBJECTIONS, LOOKING TOWARD AGREEMENT ON ARRANGEMENTS WHICH TAKE INTO ACCOUNT FRENCH CONCERNS WHILE PRESERVING ESSENTIAL OUTLINES OF US PROPOSAL.

2. BASED ON REFTTEL, THE PRINCIPAL FRENCH OBJECTION APPEARS TO APPLY TO INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF ANY MECHANISM INVOLVING CONSULTATIONS DIFFERENT FROM THAT WHICH THE COUNCIL IS CAPABLE OF. US PROPOSAL ESSENTIALLY ENVISAGED (PARA 7,
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STATE 5066) NAC MEETINGS AT HIGH LEVEL, IN WHICH PERMREPS

AND SYG WOULD, OF COURSE, PARTICIPATE. ARRANGEMENT, IN OUR VIEW, WOULD BE SIMILAR TO THAT SUCCESSFULLY USED FOR THE TWO HIGH-LEVEL NAC MEETINGS IN WHICH THE THEN UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE TOOK PART AND IN WHICH PERMREPS ALSO PARTICIPATED. IF IT WOULD EASE FRENCH AND OTHER ALLIED CONCERNS, THE MEETINGS COULD BE CHARACTERIZED AS REGULAR SESSIONS OF THE NAC, REINFORCED BY ATTENDANCE OF HIGH-

LEVEL OFFICIALS FROM CAPITALS. IN OTHER WORDS, WE ARE NOT QUESTIONING THE PERMREPS' CAPABILITY OF CONDUCTING CONSULTATIONS THEMSELVES, BUT SEEKING TO RENDER MORE FRUITFUL NAC CONSULTATIONS ON CERTAIN SUBJECTS BY ENHANCING THE DEPTH OF DISCUSSIONS OF SPECIFIC TOPICS BY INVOLVING OFFICIALS AT POLICY LEVEL. IN ANY CASE, WE WOULD NOT WISH THIS PROCEDURAL ISSUE TO BECOME THE DETERMINING FACTOR IN SEARCHING FOR A CONSENSUS ON US PROPOSAL.

3. AS SUGGESTED IN STATE 13545, WHILE WELCOMING BELGIAN PROPOSAL FOR LUNCHEON, WE PREFER A MORE FORMAL GATHERING, CLEARLY WITHIN THE REGULAR COUNCIL STRUCTURE, NOT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A SEPARATE INFORMAL FORUM. THUS, FRENCH AND OTHER CONCERNS ON THIS SCORE MIGHT BE LAID TO REST BY POINTING OUT THAT THE PROPOSAL FOR A LUNCHEON MEETING WAS A BELGIAN INITIATIVE, AND THAT, WHILE ALSO WELCOMING BELGIAN GOVERNMENT'S GENEROUS INVITATION, WE DO NOT VIEW LUNCHEONS AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR MORE FORMAL DEBATE.

4. REGARDING CONCERNS EXPRESSED ABOUT PERIODICITY OF MEETINGS, WE CONTINUE TO FAVOR TWO OR THREE MEETINGS FOLLOWING EACH MINISTERIAL SESSION, FOCUSING GENERALLY ON ISSUES ARISING FROM MINISTERIAL DISCUSSION. WE WOULD NOT ENVISAGE THAT THESE SESSIONS WOULD BE HELD ON AN INVARIABLE SCHEDULE, BUT THAT SCHEDULE WOULD BE TAILORED TO THE SUBSTANTIVE WORK THAT MIGHT BE ACCOMPLISHED IN MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL INVOLVING POLITICAL DIRECTORS. IT SEEMS TO US THAT TWO OR THREE SUCH MEETINGS WOULD BE ADEQUATE TO COVER THE SUBJECT MATTER LIKELY TO WARRANT NAC SESSIONS IN THIS FORMAT. IN OTHER WORDS, THERE

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SHOULD BE A CLEARLY SUBSTANTIVE PURPOSE FOR SUCH SESSIONS, AND THE DECISION TO CONVENE THEM WOULD BE BASED UPON NAC AGREEMENT.

5. IN TERMS OF TACTICS FOR DEALING WITH THE FRENCH AND OTHERS, WE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE USEFUL FOR YOU TO CLARIFY US VIEWS ALONG FOREGOING LINES IN DISCUSSION WITH DE ROSE, SEEKING HIS COMMENTS, AND ATTEMPTING TO DETERMINE THE

EXTENT TO WHICH FRENCH INFLEXIBILITY STEMS FROM
OPPOSITION IN PRINCIPLE, OR FROM PROCEDURAL ASPECTS
OF THE US PROPOSAL. AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND, AND YOUR
FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS, WE WOULD WISH TO WEIGH NEXT
POSSIBLE STEPS TO BREAK THE IMPASSE WHICH APPEARS TO
HAVE DEVELOPED. MEANWHILE, IN YOUR CONTACTS WITH OTHER
PERMREPS, YOU SHOULD CONTINUE TO SUPPORT US PROPOSAL AND
TO CLARIFY OUR POSITION ALONG LINES SPELLED OUT ABOVE.
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